

Chapter 8

Supplemental Job Displacement Benefits

➔ For tips on how to “Keep Your Claim on Track,” see page 17. See also Chapter 9, “For More Information and Help.”

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If you were injured in 2004 or later and you have a permanent partial disability, you may be eligible to receive a supplemental job displacement benefit (SJDB).

The type of SJDB you may receive and the procedures to obtain this benefit depend on your date of injury and whether your employer offers you suitable work (as described in Chapter 6). The

first section of this chapter describes the benefit that is available to workers injured in 2013 or later. The second section describes the benefit that is available to workers injured in 2004-2012.

If You Were Injured in 2013 or Later

What is a supplemental job displacement benefit?

A supplemental job displacement benefit is a voucher that promises to help pay for educational retraining or skill enhancement, or both, at eligible schools. You can use the voucher to pay for tuition, fees, books, tools, or other expenses required by the school for retraining or skill enhancement, and for licensing or professional certification fees, related examination fees, and examination preparation course fees.

Up to \$600 of the voucher money may be used to pay for services of a licensed placement agency, a vocational or return-to-work counselor (a person who helps injured workers develop their goals and plans for returning to work), and resumé preparation. Up to \$1,000 may be used to purchase computer equipment.

Up to \$500 of the voucher money may be used upon request for miscellaneous expenses without receipts or other documentation.

What is the dollar amount of this benefit?

The voucher is redeemable up to \$6,000, regardless of your permanent disability rating. You cannot redeem the voucher as part of a settlement of your case.

How can I obtain this benefit?

The claims administrator must offer you a supplemental job displacement benefit if the following are true:

- Your injury causes permanent partial disability.
- Your employer does not offer you regular, modified, or alternative work within 60 days after the claims administrator receives the "Physician's Return-to-Work & Voucher Report" described in Chapter 6.

The claims administrator sends the voucher on a form called, "Supplemental Job Displacement Nontransferable Training Voucher Form" (DWC-AD 10133.32).

When do I receive the voucher?

The claims administrator must offer you the voucher within 20 days after the end of the period when your employer may offer you regular, modified, or alternative work (see previous section).

What schools can I attend?

The voucher helps pay for you to attend a California public school or receive training with a provider on the state's Eligible Training Provider List (EPTL). This list is posted at the website of the Employment Development Department: www.edd.ca.gov (link to Jobs & Training).

What vocational or return-to-work counselors can I use?

The state Division of Workers' Compensation maintains a list of qualified vocational and return-to-work counselors. To see the list, contact a state Information & Assistance officer (see pages 70-72). See also the DWC website: www.dwc.ca.gov.

How do I use the voucher to pay for expenses?

If you present the voucher to the school and counselor you select, they can contact the claims administrator for direct payment. If you pay the expenses directly and submit receipts to the claims administrator, the claims administrator reimburses you. He or she must do this within 45 days after receiving the receipts along with your signed voucher.

Is there a deadline for using the voucher?

Yes. The voucher expires two years after the date the voucher is furnished to you, or five years after your date of injury, whichever is later. All expenses must be incurred and submitted with required receipts and other documentation before the expiration date.

I have a problem with my supplemental job displacement benefit. What can I do?

You can contact your employer, the claims administrator, a state Information & Assistance officer, an attorney, or your union (if you have one). These resources are described in Chapter 9. Don't delay, because there are *deadlines* for taking action to protect your rights.

If You Were Injured in 2004-2012

What is a supplemental job displacement benefit?

A supplemental job displacement benefit is a voucher that promises to help pay for educational retraining or skill enhancement, or both, at state-approved or state-accredited schools. You can use the voucher to pay for tuition, fees, books, or other expenses required by the school for retraining or skill enhancement. Up to 10 percent of the voucher money may be used to pay for services of a vocational or return-to-work counselor, a person who helps injured workers develop their goals and plans for returning to work.

What is the dollar amount of this benefit?

The amount depends on the rating that a workers' compensation judge considers appropriate for your permanent disability. The judge makes this determination when reviewing a settlement of your case or when issuing a Findings and Award in your case. For more information about permanent disability ratings, see Chapter 7.

The dollar amounts of vouchers are as follows:

- Up to \$4,000 for permanent disability ratings less than 15 percent
- Up to \$6,000 for permanent disability ratings between 15 and 25 percent
- Up to \$8,000 for permanent disability ratings between 26 and 49 percent
- Up to \$10,000 for permanent disability ratings between 50 and 99 percent

How can I obtain this benefit?

The claims administrator must send you a supplemental job displacement benefit if the following are true:

- Your employer does not offer you modified or alternative work within 30 days after your final temporary disability (TD) payment,
- You do not return to work for your employer within 60 days after that payment, and
- Your injury causes permanent partial disability.

The claims administrator sends the voucher on a form called, "Supplemental Job Displacement Nontransferable Training Voucher Form" (DWC-AD 10133.57).

When do I receive the voucher?

The claims administrator must send you the voucher within 25 days after a workers' compensation judge issues an award for permanent partial disability.

What schools can I attend?

The voucher helps pay for you to attend a state-approved or state-accredited school. This can be a California community college, a California state university, or the University of California.

Or it can be a private school that is:

- Accredited by one of the regional associations of schools and colleges authorized by the US Department of Education
- or—
- Approved by the California Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education
- or—
- Certified by the Federal Aviation Administration.

What vocational or return-to-work counselors can I use?

The state Division of Workers' Compensation maintains a list of qualified vocational and return-to-work counselors. To see the list, contact a state Information & Assistance officer (see pages 70-72). See also the DWC website: www.dwc.ca.gov.

How do I use the voucher to pay for expenses?

If you present the voucher to the school and counselor you select, they can contact the claims administrator for direct payment. If you pay the expenses directly and submit receipts to the claims administrator, the claims administrator reimburses you. He or she must do this within 45 days after receiving the receipts along with your signed voucher.

Is there a deadline for using the voucher?

Yes. Vouchers issued in 2013 or later expire two years after the date the voucher is furnished to you, or five years after your date of injury, whichever is later. All expenses

must be incurred and submitted with required receipts and other documentation before the expiration date.

Vouchers issued before 2013 do not have an expiration date.

I have a problem with my supplemental job displacement benefit. What can I do?

You can contact your employer, the claims administrator, a state Information & Assistance officer, an attorney, or your union (if you have one). These resources are described in Chapter 9. Don't delay, because there are *deadlines* for taking action to protect your rights.